How To Know If You Are Called To Remain Single

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How do you know if you are called to remain single? Inquiring minds want to know!

Matthew 19:12 is one of the first places you look to verify if there is such a calling.

Everyone is called to remain single temporary, right? Until you get married you're called to remain single. So there is the temporary call but this study deals with the permanent call. What is that one like? Matthew 19:12 is where Jesus is talking about eunuchs. Starting with verse 11 Jesus replied:

Not everyone can except this teaching but only those to whom it has been given.
For some are eunuchs because they were born that way;

One would image that is referring to a physical deformity of some sort.

….others were made that way by men;

That was not an uncommon practice in other parts of the world in Jesus' day where they would castrate men who served the king and queen in the palace.

….and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven.
The one who can accept this should accept it.

So, there are some who have renounced marriage, not because they hate it, but because they have realized that it's not going to be part of their calling in life. It's not going to be a part of their story.

Celebacy in the Roman Catholic priesthood, for example, has been mandated for 900 years. The current Roman Catholic Catechism has a section called "virginity for the sake of the kingdom" which reads:

Christ is the center of all Christian life. The bond with him takes precedent over all other bonds - family or social. From the very beginning of the church there have been men and women who have renounced the great good of marriage.....They have renounced the great good of marriage to follow the Lamb wherever he goes, to be intent on the things of the Lord, to seek to please him and to go out to meet the Bridegroom who is coming. Christ himself has invited certain persons to follow him in this way of life of which he remains the model. (Then it quotes Matthew 19:12).

Virginity for the sake of the kingdom of heaven is an unfolding of baptismal grace. A powerful sign of the supremacy of the bond with Christ and of the ardent expectation of his return. A sign which also recalls that marriage is a reality of this present age which is passing away. Both the sacraments of matrimony and virginity for the kingdom of God come from the Lord himself.

It is important to understand that it is a gift. It is not something that you have to be dragged into, kicking and screaming.

It is Jesus who gives them meaning and grants them the grace which is indispensable for living them out in conformity with his will. Esteem of virginity for the sake of the kingdom and the Christian understanding of marriage are inseparable and they reinforce each other.

Then they quote John Chrysostom:

"whoever denigrates marriage also diminishes the glory of virginity." Marriage makes virginity more admirable and resplendent. What appears good only in comparison with evil would not be truly good. The most excellent good is something even better than what is admitted to be good……..

…….Some profess virginity or consecrated celibacy which enables them to give themselves to God alone with an undivided heart in a remarkable manner.

So how do you know if you are called for a permanent life of celibacy?

1) God first heals you from any sexual (or other major) brokenness that you may have, so that the call is not received (or misperceived) out of the fears and confusion that surround brokenness.

This is one of the very first things that you want to look at. A lot of people believe that they are called to singleness because they're still afraid of the opposite sex. They are imagining a call that really is isn't there. You have to look at this closely and carefully and ask the Holy Spirit to show you the truth: What is deep inside of me perhaps that I can't even see? What is motivating me to perceive that I am being called to this? Am I still afraid of the opposite sex? Am I still angry at them for what was done to me? Am I still broken in some way? Is that what is motivating a flight into singleness? If so, then it is not a call from God at that moment.

Sometimes anger at parents who want you to marry can create a false sense of calling. "Your getting old, so marry already!" they beg, cajole and plea. They want it over with. They want the supposed evidence that you're "normal". They want their version of how you're to be happy. They want grandchildren! So you may be so angry at your parents for relentlessly pressuring you to marry that you switch into "revenge of the eunuch"

mode - imagining a call to singleness out of pressure and exasperation from your parents. That is not a true call either.

Fear of the opposite sex can be a major cause of imagining a call to lifelong singleness. Fear and unbelief, or self-doubt based on brokenness.

Fear of commitment is another, particularly with men. You may perceive you are called to remain single simply because you are still afraid to commit. You still haven't unmasked that fear and addressed the roots of it. So your call is not from God.

There could be a problem with unmasked and unhealed narcissism. You're still fixed on yourself at an unhealthy level and there is no desire for the "other" yet.

The possibilities for what sorts of brokenness might cause you to imagine a call from God to permanent singleness are legion, so it is vital to pursue a deep and intimate relationship with God so that He can guide you through that maze and bring healing, at least to a significant degree. God heals you of the deep brokenness first before He ever calls you to singleness because if He called you in the midst of that brokenness you would forever be left with a doubt about the genuine nature of your call.

2) Secondly, God does not impose the call.

He does not drag you kicking and screaming. Rather, He works within your heart and mind so that you *gratefully* embrace the honor that is being offered. God declares in Isaiah 56:3b-5:

Let not the eunuch complain "I am only a dry tree". This is what the Lord says, to the eunuch's who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant to them, I will give within my temple and it's walls a memorial and a name better than the sons and daughters.

I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off.

Do you see the honor of the call in God's estimation? It's not just something that He lays upon people in order to get something accomplished. We often cast God in our image. We use people to get things done. God is not like that. If He's calling you to permanent celibacy, it is an honor that He is bestowing upon you. And there will be a reward to having said "Yes" to the call and for taking on the difficulty of that call.

What I found in the early stages of my healing process, (it's been 35 years now), was that I had a deathly fear of being called to permanently celibacy. The reason was that I had unconsciously concluded that the public evidence of my being healed from my homosexual confusion was going to be getting married and having children. I was looking for something to label myself with to prove to myself and to the world (who doubted that God could change a homosexual) that He indeed could. So I resisted the thought and kept my eye open for the one to marry.

But over a long period of time, (about 10 years), the Lord started to work into my heart a love for the call to be single. As He healed me of my major issues, (which took 7 years), He showed me scriptures like Isaiah 56 and I began to see it not as a terrible sentence but as a wonderful gift. So before He actually asked me, I was ready to receive it as the gift and honor that it is.

God will not give you a gift that He knows you won't appreciate. He first works in your heart so that you welcome it as the treasure that it is (not without some trepidation, but out of trust in His desire for your ultimate best).

Let me give you a simple illustration of how this kind of thing works. You've all seen parents trying to feed a baby who doesn't want to eat. What do the wise parents do? They make an airplane out of the spoon and pretend to come in for a landing in the baby's mouth - eliciting a delight and desire within the child to receive the spoonful of

food. In a similar way, God works in our hearts and our minds so that we delight in the things that He wants to give us. Because we're too stupid to know what is good, He works around our initial resistance and makes His desire delightful to us. This is what he did in my life. It took Him awhile because of my fears over the whole idea, but He knew exactly what to do to get me to receive His highest blessing.

God orchestrates events to persuade us to choose something we would choose if we were more mature or had the eternal perspective to recognize its beauty. But we don't. We're not omniscient. We don't have all the facts. We don't see the eternal perspective. We don't see the incredible blessing that God has in store for us as a result of doing His will. So God does not impose the call to singleness. But He does work in our hearts and minds so that we gratefully embrace the honor that is being offered, if we want it.

This call, by the way, doesn't make someone better than others. It is simply one of the blessings that comes in having done what we were created to do. And each and every person has a blessing for doing that, no matter what their call.

3) Thirdly, God works a physical miracle in your body so that you can physically and emotionally endure the particular nature of the call to singleness.

You see, we were created to find pleasure in sex and to mate and to find pleasure in that unity and in being made one with another. And so this call to lifelong singleness goes somewhat against the grain of the basic way humans have been designed.

And so, it doesn't make sense for Him to impose such intense levels of unrequited hormonal torment without doing some sort of miracle in the body to remove passions that would otherwise be uncontrollable. And so, I prayed for that miracle and received a significant reduction in such passion. He didn't remove all of it, but enough so that His grace would be sufficient for me to remain faithful to Him in the call. Even the passion

that He allowed to remain, I believe, has served to maintain my sense of being masculine and in being a normal, healthy male. Blessings on every side!

The bodily miracle must be sought by faith however. He doesn't impose this on you either. You need to choose every step along this path. Otherwise, in moments of trial and self-pity, you will eventually begin to resent God for His gift. But you will have no one but yourself to blame, because you chose and agreed to each step along the way. Consequently, the blame can never fall back on God during rough periods when Satan is trying to destroy the blessing that God has bestowed upon you. Don't you just love the genius of God in the way He works all things?

Note: People who have a temporary call to singleness can seek and receive this same bodily miracle, only for them the grace will remain only until the time when they are to meet their future spouse.

Many years ago, when I was the floor pastor at the 700 Club's LA counseling center, my boss discerned that I was struggling in this area and said "You know David, I asked God to take away this torment until such time as I would marry so that I could focus on the things of the kingdom and not be so continuously distracted, and He did! And when I met the woman I was going to marry, He brought it all back, so that when I married everything was working naturally in that sense."

There is a great fear in people to ask for this gift because they are afraid that once God takes it away it won't come back when they get married. And so a lot of us live in hormonal torture without ever asking God to remove at least some of it. We're also afraid that in some way we will become less human. But there is in fact a temporary version of this gift, especially for those are going to be waiting ten, fifteen years before getting married.

And I am going to use the word mystical again. I used it another workshop and it is a word that the New Age movement uses and it strikes fear into a lot of Christian hearts. But it is a Christian word and the New Age movement swiped it from us. So when we talk about the mystery of Christ the mystery of the trinity the mystery of the Bridegroom being Jesus and the church being his bride. These are all mysteries and so I am using it in the Christian sense here. But there is a mystical completion of sexuality in the one called. If you are called to permanent celibacy, singleness. God completes you in a mysterious way sexually. In the same way that you would be completed in whatever way it is that the two become one flesh again. As it says in Genesis 2, they will be when they marry, you are made that one flesh in your sexuality with God. Most people it's the one flesh thing the sexually thing, whatever it is it's a mystery, impossible to really describe in detail. There is a oneness that happens.

Adam, when Adam was first created Eve was inside of this guy. She was inside, ever thought of that? When Adam was initially created Eve in inside of him cuz she had to be take out of him. I think that is why the two must become one flesh again. The two that have been separated out from the original image needs to go back. There is a lot of debate in the Christian church about this. Is the image of God made complete when there is a marriage. I believe there is. A lot of Christian theologians believe I am wrong. But, I speculate it's about half and half on that particular debate in the Christian church. I believer there is a completion of the image, at least a part of what the image means when the husband and wife become one flesh again.

So where do that leave the single person? I believe that completion is done directly with God. As one of the parts of the call, one of the things that he does to make sure that the call results in a person still being a whole, mature complete person. In all the ways that that needs to be done.

A person is a spoused to God. And so completed by God in the way that married couples complete one another. I believe this strongly for one reason because of a vision I received. Which is the next points.

God gives you a supernatural revelation where you become wed to him and thereby receive into yourself the completion of his image. Normally achieved in holy matrimony with a spouse.

Let me read one other thing out of the Roman Catholic Caticism. This is a section on consecrated virgins. I think it has to do with nuns only doesn't it. But the principles I think are appropriate here. Consecrated Virgins.

From apostolic times Christians virgins called by the Lord to cling only to him with greater freedom of heart, body and spirit. Have decided with the churches approval to live in a state of virginity for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Virgins who committed to the holy plan of following Christ more closely are consecrated to God by the diasciose and Bishop according to the approval of literal rite. Are betroved mystically to Christ the Son of God and are dedicated to service of the church. By this solemn rite the virgin is constituted as sacred person an transcendent sign of the churches love for Christ and escallilgy image of this heavenly bride of Christ and of the life to come. (boy that is a mouth full.)

As with other forms of consecrated life The Order of Virgins establishes the woman living in the world or the nun in prayer, penitence, service of her brethren and apostolic activities according to the sate of life and spiritual gifts given to her. Concentrated virgins can form themselves into associations to observe their commitment more faithfully.

There is a mystical union, and I will never forget the night I had been living celibate some 10 years at this point. And I was mad at God, I wanted an answer. Am I going to

marry or not? I'm tired of living in this doubt and wonder and thinking about this all the time. Please God I can put my mind on you more if you'll just tell me this one thing. So I really pressed him one night. I said God please tell me, one way or the other. I am willing to go it whichever way you want because I trust in you. I know that whatever you ask me to do will be perfect for me. That it will the best thing I could of ever done. That it will have eternal fruit. If I'm called to be single which I was beginning to realize, go ahead and tell me please. So I can get this off my mind. And that night he gave me a vision and in this vision I married the Father and the Son in heaven. I was transported into heaven and there was a marriage ceremony. With a ring and I was wed to them. And I remember thinking where is the Holy Spirit. And later on the Lord showed me that He's on earth. This was going on in heaven, the Holy Spirit is currently on earth, doing His job. That is a little confusing I know because God is omnipresent, but basically the Holy Spirit is on earth. In the sense that Jesus was on earth for a while. So there was this vision and it was very solemn and I couldn't tell anybody. It was so deeply profound and moving to me that the idea that I would tell somebody and that they would laugh at it or devalue it in some way. It would break my heart. So I couldn't tell anybody for a least a year. In fact, I knew that God didn't want me to tell anybody.

And, so a year later I'm on this Roman Catholic talk show, on EWTN. And Jeanette B. is is called the Abundant Life, and she's the producer of this show. And I figure she's catholic I can tell her this story. She's not going to laugh at it. So I tell her this story and she goes, David, the first time I saw you the Lord told me your going to be a priest. Now she got the denomination wrong I ended up a Charismatic Episcopal Priest. But it was a word of knowledge for me, it was a direction for me. She recognized my vision as something that the Catholic Church by enlarge recognizes. And what I didn't know was that nuns and Priests regularly are given this vision by God in the Catholic Church. It is the common experience among those called to celibacy in the Catholic Church. What confirmation that was to me for God not to let me know that ahead of time. To give me the vision first and then have it confirmed and so forth and so on. There's multiple confirmations you can't just just go off a vision because you know it, a vision can come

from any place. There needs to be multiple confirmations of visions and things like that. But in some way God will supernaturally reveal to you the call. Not necessarily a vision, I am a visually oriented person. God gives me visions. Because that is what speaks to me. That is what I can understand. But there is a supernatural revelation in which you become wed to Him in a deep and a profound way. And you are completed in your sexuality.

I can pretty much trace the security and the completion and the fulfillment that I now feel and have felt ever since to that vision. I have never been more sexually complete and fulfilled, I have never felt more sexual, more like a man, ever in my life, since that vision, since that wedding ceremony. Later on I told Leanne Payne about the vision and she went “oh David everybody must have that vision before they get married.” So she didn’t take it as God telling me I was going to remain single. But her point is a valid point. Everyone needs to find a completion in God first. Before they can really be healthy enough to wed and have a healthy thing going on there. And that is a good point that she was trying to make with me. And it is a valid one.

Another thing about the permanent call which is not in your notes but I have it under this. The permanent call or vision carries with it a knowing of its meaning, you just know. If god ever done anything in your life where you just knew, what he was telling you. There was not sitting down and meditating on it and trying to figure out. With the revelation came the knowing of what the revelation meant. That phenomenon occurs with the supernatural revelation, at least it did with me. No understand your getting one persons experience here. Which can not necessarily be extrapolated to each and every case. I think the principles are sound and can be broadly looked for. But if your walk ends up different with different elements to it that would not surprise me at all.

5) God provides multiple confirmations of the call. Now probably not everybody in this room believes that prophecy is still in operation today. I do and God used prophecies from people who had no idea that, because I had told no one. No idea that I had this

vision. That I was sensing the call. People coming up to me with a prophetic word, saying things to me that just put a seal on it. Yep, your right. So God gives several people coming up and giving me prophetic words. And most of the prophetic words has nothing to do with being single or being married. They were about other things but the words used told me God was confirming to me. This thing about being single. One of them was Jeanett B. word.

Sometimes there are divine appointments in scripture that serve as confirmations. You know you end up reading things that just sort of leap out of page at you and has a strong and certain confirmation of what you have been suspecting on this issue. Divine appoints occur not only with people they occur in the scripture. You know that. Comments by strangers or friends, sermons that you just happen to turn on to the radio and there is a sermon that is speaking right to the issue. Or in your own church, meetings with others who are called in the same manner. I started running into people who with a permanent call to celibacy. Not coincidental as far as I'm concerned. Multiple conformations of the call also can come in the mist of prayer and meditation where the Lord just speaks that still small voice into your spirit. And says "Yeah David, Yeah whoever". Or when you are meditating on scripture which in the Christian sense is to fix your mind on as oppose to the new age sense of emptying your mind of. That is an important distinction.

Remember God wants you to know about the getting of this gift even as much as you do. He's not going to hide it from you if He is giving it to you. His timing and revealing it to you will be different than you hope, quite possibly. He does want you to know that that's His desire for you and He will communicate that to you. If you have the call.

6) God provides a grace to withstand the pressure of well intentioned friends and church leaders who do not understand this call on your life. The one thing that I discovered, I'm in the Protestant church, even though Anglicans are like to think of themselves the vedia de media the middle ground between Roman thelogism and Protestism. I have

discovered that most people, most pastors in the Protestant world have no concept of a call for celibacy and their afraid of it. And I don't even mention it much anymore, because I know I'm going to get an automatic doubting sometime lecture. Somebody who doesn't really know me, who hasn't gone though what I have gone, has no real reason to be lecturing me. But there is a fear, I think in the church, in the Protestant church that if we talk about this we're going to persuade easily lead young people to take on a call that is not really theirs.

That is a legitimate concern because young people take on heroes and sometimes the hero is the Priest. The one who is called to be single and they will perceive a call to themselves just because their hero has the call. When in fact they are not really being called for it. But I don't think the answer is to keep silent on the issue, I don't think that is ever the answer. I think the answer is to teach on it at length so that it is fully understood in all it's ramifications. So that when young people manifest in this way, not like their demons or anything, but when they manifest in this way. We know what to do, we know how to talk to them, we know how to help them distinguish the differences from what is going on in their life. I think that a lot of parents they don't want their children to called to be single they want grandchildren. And they, don't care what God thinks, they want grandchildren and they're going to resist the call for singleness to their children with all of their might and every breath that they have. That's another problem. That's unfortunate. But there's a lot of well intentions thinking in there by friends and church leaders who do not understand this kind of a call for people.

There is a common assumption and I see it all the time in peoples eyes when I tell people that I have been called to be single permanently. There is an assumption that something must be wrong with me. That you have imaged this because there is still something dysfunctional about you. And you can sometimes see it in their eyes the way they look back at you. But it very damaging especially for people coming out of homosexuality. The ever straights want you to hurry up and show that your healed by getting married and having kids. And they put this unintentioned usually, very subtle

sometimes but defiant pressure on you to do things faster than you should. You should never date until you are ready. You should never get married until you are ready. And yet the hope in the church at least the Protestant world, the Catholic church and the Anglican church and the Lutern church have a better understanding of the call to singleness but the rest of the Protestant world. , well the Orthodox church does too, but the Protestant world by enlarge has a real fear of this issue and there is this pressure to date, there is this pressure to get married. It seems to me sometimes that folks would rather I be having an affair. Than to be celibate. It's that severe in some folks minds. And so part of the call is a gifting of God to help you weather that. At first it is very damaging it is very hurtful. You go home and you cry. Then after a while you realize, you know they don't understand. They haven't been given this perspective that God has given you because you need to be given the perspective to understand your call. They haven't got that. It is like coming to terms with the father that never hugged you. Well his father never hugged him. So you come to terms, understand why that is and so when he doesn't hug you now it doesn't hurt you so much because you understand that he in some ways doesn't have the capacity to. It is the same kind of thing. God gives you the grace to withstand the pressure of well intentioned friends.

And it finally distinguishing a temporary call to singleness from a permanent one. Which I have already eluded to. Everyone has a call to singleness for some period of time. Even the removal of sexual feelings may only be temporary. One of the things you might want to do is call for a fleece. Judges 6:37, is where Gideon laid out a fleece before God. Literally, and that means you ask God to show you in some specific way by a specific sign what his will is for you. And sometimes He'll do it, sometimes He won't. Why doesn't He all the time? I think that often has to do with the fact that He's trying to train us greater issues of patience and long suffering and not getting things easily so that we'll value them greater, more greatly when we receive them. All these other issues can help explain why God might not answer a fleece and a host of others. But sometimes he does if we're doing it out of a healthy place. If we're not doing it persumptiously, if we're not doing in a demanding way. Sometimes when we lay out a

fleece we're demanding God to tell us or we're going to stay mad at him if he doesn't. Not going to get an answer out of that one. But if you do it in the proper mode as the Holy Spirit is leading you laying out a fleece can sometimes be an option for receiving guidance in this area.

The multiplicity of signs and the leading into kingdom work that would ruin a marriage. In my life that was one of the signs for me. God was putting me in a place, I mean I'm traveling continuously, 80% of the time, I'm somewhere in the world teaching. My life would ruin a marriage. The nature of my call in ministry was one of the signs to me. That what I suspected in the midst of all the other signs could be accurate.

Now I'd like to invite Joseph Marshall who is with us. Joseph has spoken at Exodus before and he has a call, a permanent call to be celibate and I've asked him to just come up in a few minutes and tell us how he, how God spoke to him and how he became certain that God was actually telling him to do this.

Thank You.

I was telling David that when I taught on this topic I called it "celibacy the other option." Because in Exodus there seems like there is only be one option if your going to prove that your healed to get married. I am a Roman Catholic Priest and that is why I have a permanent call to celibacy.

Now for me it was a bit different than that. If you grow up in a tradition of which that is revered and respected you have a much different attitude towards it so that was my experience. And I had a sense of call on my life from the time I was 14 but the homosexual struggle in me was the stumbling block to receiving that call. And so it took me many years from that 14 I was 26 when I had what I call my spiritual conversion or born again kind of experience in which I knew very clearly that God was calling me out of the gay lifestyle. Because I had bought into all the pro gay theology stuff, I was a gay

activist within the Catholic church, some of you know the organization of Dignity. Pro gay, I had started a chapter of Dignity right out of college and I also had was very involved in the Dignity group i San Franciso. What was going on, God was working in that all the time because I was a person who never left the church and I was a person of prayer and I had parents who truly were deeply committed to prayer and were praying for me. And hoping for me to come to know the truth. I always tell parents about that and encourage them in that there is great power in their prayers.

But one of the interesting things was that what I found in, I had three serious relationships, committed relationships. The last one was when I was living in San Franciso when I was tow and a half years in that particular relationship. And I knew that this my experience with that man was the finest experience I had ever had. I knew there was not someone better than him out there. So I have a very different kind of testimony if you want to hear it, it's on past Exodus tapes. My father and I had taught also on healing Father and son relationships and it's on that tape, my testimony and how I came out of the lifestyle. But, one of the things about coming to know this call was that in that relationship over time it began to be clear to me that this was not God's call on my life that there was something wrong with this. Where was it going to be in ten years? Where was it going to be in 20 years? What was going to keep us together, even though I knew that this was the best kind of that I could find. I knew there was a limitation and I had begun to really understand that there was still deep need of healing in my life, especially in my relationship with my father. And I was actively praying for that healing.

And the thing that was very striking to me in that relationship was that it never seemed comfortable to just be with one person. Even though it was very clear that he loved me and that I loved him in that it just didn't seem right for me. And I would say that that was something that when I thought about it was true in any relationship that I had been. I always felt sort of constrained that I wasn't meant just to be for one person. That is part of this.

There is also, was very clear sense that to with this kind of commitment there is only one reason for it. It is for the sake of the kingdom, it is for the sake of the Gospel, it is for the sake of your relationship with Jesus Christ. And this particular call that you have to go out and be available the way that David was talking about, to go anywhere that Christ is going to call you. The many people who know me through Exodus know they ask where are you now? Because I've lived in seven different states and three different countries in the twelve years that I've been involved with Exodus. Involved with three different Exodus ministries. And that is because that is how our live works within the Catholic church, I'm an order Priest not a diosicse Priest and I get moved around. And so that makes me more available in one way.

The other important thing I think that you should know and think about there are many unloved people in the world. A part of this call is answering the call, who will love the unloved? That was often said by Mother Teresa in the work that she did. Who is going to love these people who are unloved? Who's going to reach out to them? Who, what families can reach some of these people? They can't. Only people who are called and have a call for the sake of the kingdom are free to be able to love the unloved. So I think that must be one the prime motivations.

I'd also like to say you don't choose this because you feel that you would not be a good husband or a good father, or a good wife or a good mother. No! Because of the relationship that you have with God, God has completed you, God has made you the whole person. It's not that you are perfect but you know there is a difference between where you were and where you are now. And so you embrace that and like I have often said had I now been called to celibate commitment to the Priesthood. I think, I'm pretty clear that I would of been married about 10 years ago, sometime about 7 years after my coming out of the life style. Been out for 18 years. Just as David. And so that is another thing. That you know that your capable in a sense of a married commitment. And the gifts that that calls for. Because those very gifts are also needed for the kingdom. For the sake of the kingdom.

The last thing that I would just say is that, in one of the books that David was going to talk about that I also recommended when I did this class. It's by Keith Clark, who is ------ -- of Franscian Priest called "being sexual and celibate." And it is one of the better books on this topic. And of the things he says is that in the times of greatest loneliness in ones life if you are called to a celibate commitment. You are called to deep intimacy with God and communion with God in those moments of loneliness. And God is going to complete you and fill you in that.

If you are called to marriage when you have that moment, it is not that you don't need that relationship with God. Obviously you need it, God has to have worked in you and completed you. But your primarily called when you have that kind of loneliness to find it in deep communion with your spouse. It's not that they answer all your needs but that when that's happening there's something calling you to deeper relationship and intimacy with your spouse and that's the difference between the two calls. So I found that very interesting and hopeful kind of book.

Last thing that I would say, it's not just protestant world that fears celibacy. It's very big fear for many people and the biggest stumbling block for people, most people. Men and women called to a celibate commitment in the Catholic Church today because of the culture we live in is the biggest fear that they have. It is the one that, the greatest stumbling block just as it was in my life and that's because in most of us have already we violated, because of the culture today we violated and we've gotten sexually active. And we really don't know that we can do it. And only with God's healing grace can you get to a healthy place of embracing it truly as the gift that it is.

clapping, clapping.... (father foster again)

So there we have the picture as we understand it. I would like to hear from you. Is there anyone here who has felt the call or who has some understanding on this issue.

Q.

A. Yes. That is very important. I'm glad you brought that up again, because, one of the things that people worry about beyond the sexual, how do you get your sexual needs met question. Is what about loneliness? Don't you ever get lonely? I can tell you, I don't. The intimacy with the Father, fills in that place. I can be alone and I am alone often and never be lonely. There's an abiding sense of His presence. Actually everybody should develop this. Everybody should have this. It's there for everybody. But that is the way that God helps the celibate.

Q.

A. For the sake of the tape. We just had a testimony to the effect of someone here receiving a sense of God's call through the Matthew 19 passage that we read in the beginning of the lecture. To sort of affirming one of the ways that God guides us. Thank you.

Q. What if you have had a burning desire forever to be a father? But you don't have the burning desire. Is that just indication that you are not ready there? Or is that necessarily indication that you are definitely there?

A. If you find that within yourself a lifelong desire to be married. To be a father. To be a mother. That is a significant thing to look at. Because God guides in those ways quite often. To things that he's deposited in you from the beginning. That have been there throughout thick and thin through your life. Often that is a significant sign as to what God's destiny for you is. It is not the definite sign because I always have, I also had longings to be married. But it can be a significant sign. Yes, and I would pled with God for specific conformation one way or the other on that.

Q.

A. The comment is that some people who have had this desire to be a parent all their lives sometimes God fulfills that through adoption. Yeah.

Q.

A. I've just been asked the most asked question in any seminary on earth. Is there one lady? I happen to believe that there is someone created just for you. But I also believe that if you make the wrong choice. God makes the choice you made into plan A. He turns plan B into plan A. God is wise. He is powerful. Even when we make the wrong choices He redeem them and makes them as good or nearly as good as what He originally wanted. If we give it over to God with kind of attitude and think of faith, we don't have to be worried that, oh I missed the one. Because even if you missed the one. God will make the one, the one. I really believe that.

Q.

A. The comment is through death and remarriage. After the lose of a spouse, you end up with more than the one, you end up with the two.

Q.

A. If a person has gone through sex change operation. Are you talking about a non reversible sex change operation? Most of them are I hear these days. Most of them are reversible. But if is an irreversible sex change operation. Are they therefore forced into celibacy. Yikes what a question. I'm not sure I know the answer to that. I'm just going to have to say, I don't know the answer to that. Does anyone have an answer to that?

Amen. The comment is that no one is called to the sex change. But if you got before you came to Christ let's say, and now it is irreversible, then it is a go to God and get the answer from Him kind of question. There really is, that is one of those that you got to have God tell you what to do on that.

Q.

A. The only thing I'd like to say, is that if you are wrong. Don't blame me. That's great. I want to go back to your question about the transsexual who is inoperative for reversal. These kind of dilemma through one into a deeper intimacy with God cuz you've got to have an answer. As terrible as the situation looks. It becomes a highly redeeming scenario in that you are forced into a deeper relationship with God than you ever would of chosen otherwise. And in that there is a blessing.

Q.

A. There is a peace and a joyfulness and a happiness and a certainty that comes to you. that yes this is it. If the call is really there.